

Message Text

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TAGS:UR, US, OVIP (VANCE, CYRUS R.)

SUBJECT: SOVIET HIGHLIGHTS, JUNE 8-15, 1978

1. OVERVIEW. SOVIET PROPAGANDISTS CONTINUE TO ATTACK THE ANNAPOLIS SPEECH BUT A DEFINITIVE ASSESSMENT IS STILL LACKING. THE KGB, MEANWHILE, IS HAVING A FIELD DAY AGAINST US PERSONNEL AND DOMESTIC DISSENTERS. AT THE SAME TIME, HOWEVER, PROGRESS OR HINTS OF PROGRESS ARE EVIDENT IN OUR ARMS CONTROL NEGOTIATIONS. THE SINO-SOVIET BORDER TALKS SEEM TO BE CONCLUDING YET ANOTHER UNSUCCESSFUL ROUND.

2. US-USSR. THERE IS STILL NO AUTHORITATIVE KREMLIN RESPONSE TO THE PRESIDENT'S ANNAPOLIS SPEECH. ONE MAY NOT BE FORTHCOMING UNTIL THE JULY 5 SUPREME SOVIET SESSION, IF
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THEN. MEANWHILE, -

--SECOND-ECHELON PRESS CRITICISM OF THE PRESIDENT'S REMARKS IS INCREASINGLY SINGLING OUT DR. BRZEZINSKI AS THE MALE-
VOLENT FORCE IN US POLICY; - --

--LECTURE AUDIENCES ARE BEING TOLD THERE HAS BEEN A SERIOUS

CHANGE FOR THE WORSE IN THE WHOLE US-USSR RELATIONSHIP;

-

--THE SOVIETS HAVE PUBLICIZED LAST JULY'S PNG ACTION AGAINST MRS. PETERSON FOR ESPIONAGE AND HAVE IMPLIED THAT SHE WAS INVOLVED IN THE POISONING OF A SOVIET CITIZEN; AND

--INTERNATIONAL HARVESTER REPRESENTATIVE CRAWFORD WAS ARRESTED, AND AN ATTEMPT WAS MADE TO COMPROMISE NEW YORK TIMES MOSCOW BUREAU CHIEF SHIPLER.

3. SOVIET MOTIVATION FOR THESE HEAVY-HANDED ACTIONS PROBABLY INCLUDED:

--RETALIATION FOR US LEGAL PROCEEDINGS AGAINST THE TWO SOVIETS JAILED FOR ESPIONAGE; -

--US PUBLICITY GIVEN THE SOVIET INTELLIGENCE PENETRATION OF EMBASSY MOSCOW; AND

--GENERAL PIQUE AT WHAT THE LEADERSHIP VIEWS AS THE INCREASINGLY PROVOCATIVE US PUBLIC STANCE.

4. ARMS CONTROL. THERE ARE SIGNS OF TENTATIVE MOVEMENT ON THE ARMS CONTROL FRONT. - -

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--IN MBFR, WHILE THE SOVIET RESPONSE TO OUR APRIL 19 INITIATIVE DID NOT MEET ALL OUR CONCERNS, IT WAS MORE THAN PROPAGANDISTIC. -

--THE ASAT TALKS RESUMED WITH THE SOVIET SIDE EXPRESSING A DESIRE TO BAN HOSTILE ACTS.

--AT THE GENEVA CTB NEGOTIATIONS, THE SOVIET NEGOTIATOR CHARACTERIZED WARNKE'S LATEST PRESENTATION AS A "TURNING POINT" AND "DEFINITE STEP FORWARD."

5. AFRICA AND MIDDLE EAST. THERE IS NO CHANGE IN THE LEVEL OF SOVIET (AND CUBAN) MILITARY ACTIVITY IN ERITREA. HIGH-LEVEL, BUT UNPUBLICIZED, SOVIET-ETHIOPIAN TALKS HAVE APPARENTLY BEGUN IN MOSCOW. THE ETHIOPIAN SIDE REPORTEDLY IS SEEKING MORE ARMS AND PRESUMABLY MORE SUPPORT IN ERITREA. MEANWHILE, MOSCOW HAS INCREASED ITS PROPAGANDA COUNTEROFFENSIVE AGAINST US CHARGES OF SOVIET, CUBA, AND GDR COMPLICITY IN SHABA. -

6. CHINA. THE NEWEST "ALEKSANDROV" POLEMIC ACCUSES PEKING OF PREPARATION FOR WAR AND WARNS OF THE DANGERS

INHERENT IN SUPPLYING CHINA WITH WEAPONS AND TECHNOLOGY.
THE ARTICLE PROBABLY PRESAGES THE END TO ANOTHER ROUND OF
UNSUCCESSFUL BORDER TALKS. MEANWHILE, MOSCOW'S CONCERN

ABOUT THE DIRECTION OF SINO-US RELATIONS REMAINS ACUTE,
AS EVIDENCED BY NUMEROUS PRESS COMMENTARIES. (IN THE
PAST SOVIET RHETORIC ON CHINA HAS TENDED TO HEAT UP IN
TANDEM WITH KREMLIN CONSIDERATION OF DETENTE MOVEMENT
TOWARD THE WEST.) - -

7. DISSIDENTS. SOVIET AUTHORITIES HAVE INFORMED
GINZBURG'S LAWYER THAT HIS TRIAL COULD BE SCHEDULED "AT
ANY MOMENT." THERE IS NO MOVEMENT IN THE SHCHARANSKIY
CASE, NOR DOES SHCHARANSKIY APPARENTLY HAVE A LAWYER AS
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8. JEWISH REFUSENIK VLADIMIR SLEPAK AND HIS WIFE WERE
AGAIN DENIED PERMISSION TO EMIGRATE. SLEPAK IS CURRENTLY
IN JAIL ON CHARGES OF "HOOLIGANISM", WHICH CARRIES A
PENALTY OF UP TO FIVE YEARS DEPRIVATION OF FREEDOM. CHRISTOPHER

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